

Foundations of TESOL Methodology

This session introduces key theories and practices in language teaching. Participants will improve their understanding of language teaching methods and principles and explore how these methods can be applied to their instructional contexts through classroom practice.

This session will:

- introduce research-based instructional approaches to language education
- discuss different approaches to and purposes for language teaching
- ask participants to consider how they can apply these language teaching methods and techniques in their classrooms



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Sarah Arva Grosik



Sarah is the Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Pennsylvania English Language Programs, where she oversees and teaches English language courses and programs for international students. She also teaches graduate teacher education courses at the University of Pennsylvania and Lehigh University.

Previously, Sarah taught EFL as a Peace Corps volunteer in Gabon and at an English language institute in China, served as an primary-level ESL teacher in Philadelphia, instructed community college adult ESL classes, and taught undergraduate teacher education courses at Temple University.

Sarah holds a doctoral degree in Curriculum, Instruction, and Education from Temple University.



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Foundations of TESOL Methodology



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Session Overview

- Build a shared understanding of what a TESOL method is and why it is important to study methods
- Explore the following approaches to language teaching and examine how they can be applied in the classroom:
 - Communicative Language Teaching
 - Content-Based Instruction
 - Task-Based Language Teaching



What is a method?



Methods are:

- Systematic, established strategies and guiding ideas that inform instruction—usually based on theories of language and language learning.
- The connections between teacher's classroom practice to the beliefs that are responsible for those actions.



What TESOL methods are you familiar with?



TESOL Methods Overview

- Grammar-Translation Method
- The Direct Method
- The Audio-Lingual Method
- The Silent Way
- (De)suggestopedia
- Community Language Learning
- Total Physical Response
- **Communicative Language Teaching***
- **Content-Based Instruction**
- **Task-Based Language Teaching**

(Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011)

Method versus Approach

- What is the difference between an approach and a method?

Method	Approach
a specific instructional application with set objectives, teacher and learner roles, and classroom activities	a broad theoretical or philosophical perspective
Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Content-Based Instruction• Task-Based Language Teaching	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicative Language Teaching• Teacher-Centered Instruction

Why study TESOL Methods?

Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) present the following reasons for studying methods:

- Serve as a tool for reflection
 - Help teachers choose to teach differently and/or modify their practice
 - Develop a knowledge base, allowing teachers to join a Community of Practice
 - Continually reflect and refresh teaching
 - Expand a teacher's repertoire of techniques
-
- Can help teachers articulate and transform their understanding of the teaching and learning process

Communicative Language Teaching

- Based on the premise that language is primarily used for *communication*
- Not a single method, but rather an **approach** that can utilize different, principled methods and/or techniques



Communicative Language Teaching

Goal: to develop *communicative competence*

- the ability to use and understand language correctly and appropriately to achieve communication goals (Hymes, 1971)

Example:

- Teaching learners how to politely complain in a service interaction





**What is the teacher's role in
Communicative Language Teaching?**

Communicative Language Teaching: Teacher's Role

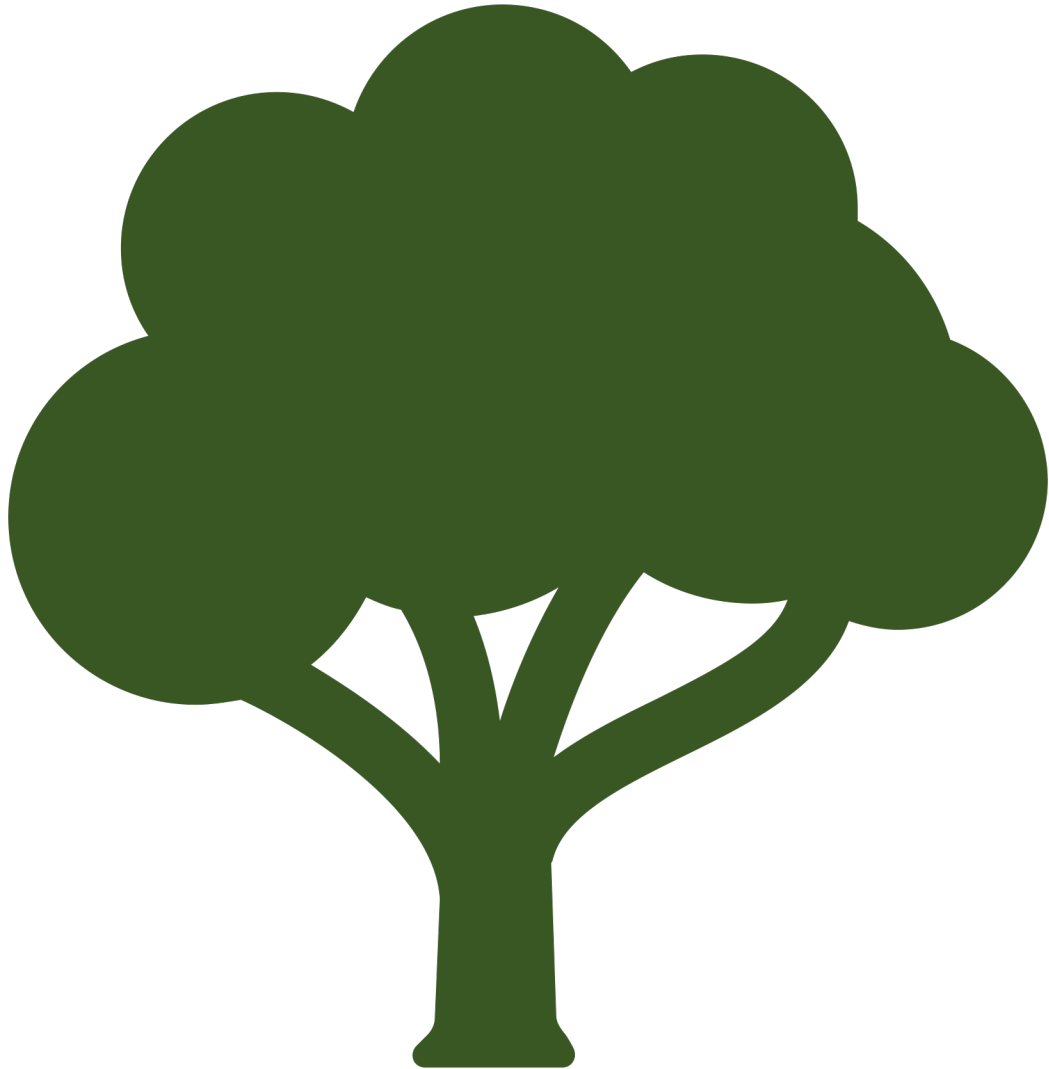
- To **facilitate** communication in the classroom
- To **enable** students to use the language to communicate
- To **provide** opportunities for students to use language appropriately in a social context
- To **give** students opportunities to negotiate meaning
- To **allow** students to express and share their opinions

Communicative Language Teaching: Teacher's Role



❖ A student-centered approach

Branches of Communicative Language Teaching



- Content Based Instruction (CBI)
- Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)
- English for Academic Purposes
- English for Specific Purposes
- Participatory Learning
- And more (this is not an exhaustive list)

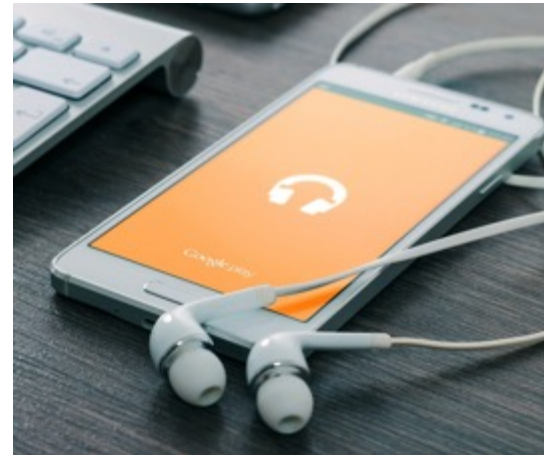
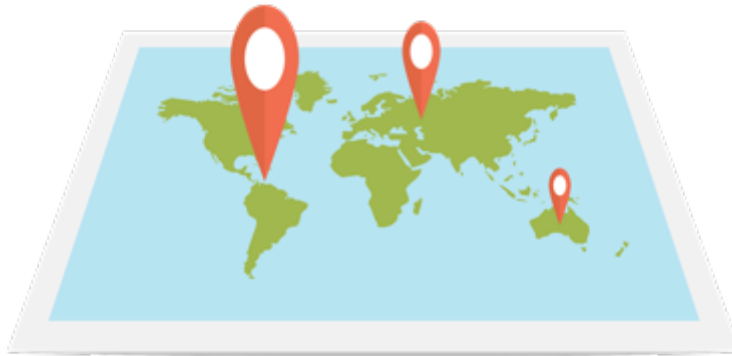
Content Based Instruction (CBI)

- A method in which **non-linguistic content** is taught to students through the medium of a language that students are at the same time learning as an additional language
- **Non-linguistic content** can include:

Academic subject matter

and/or

Themes



Content Based Instruction (CBI)

- **Goals:**



- construct knowledge and develop understanding about a topic and a learning task
- use language meaningfully and purposefully
- learn about language in the context of learning through language

- Teachers following this approach should set **BOTH language objectives AND content objectives**

What is the difference between a **language** objective and a **content** objective?



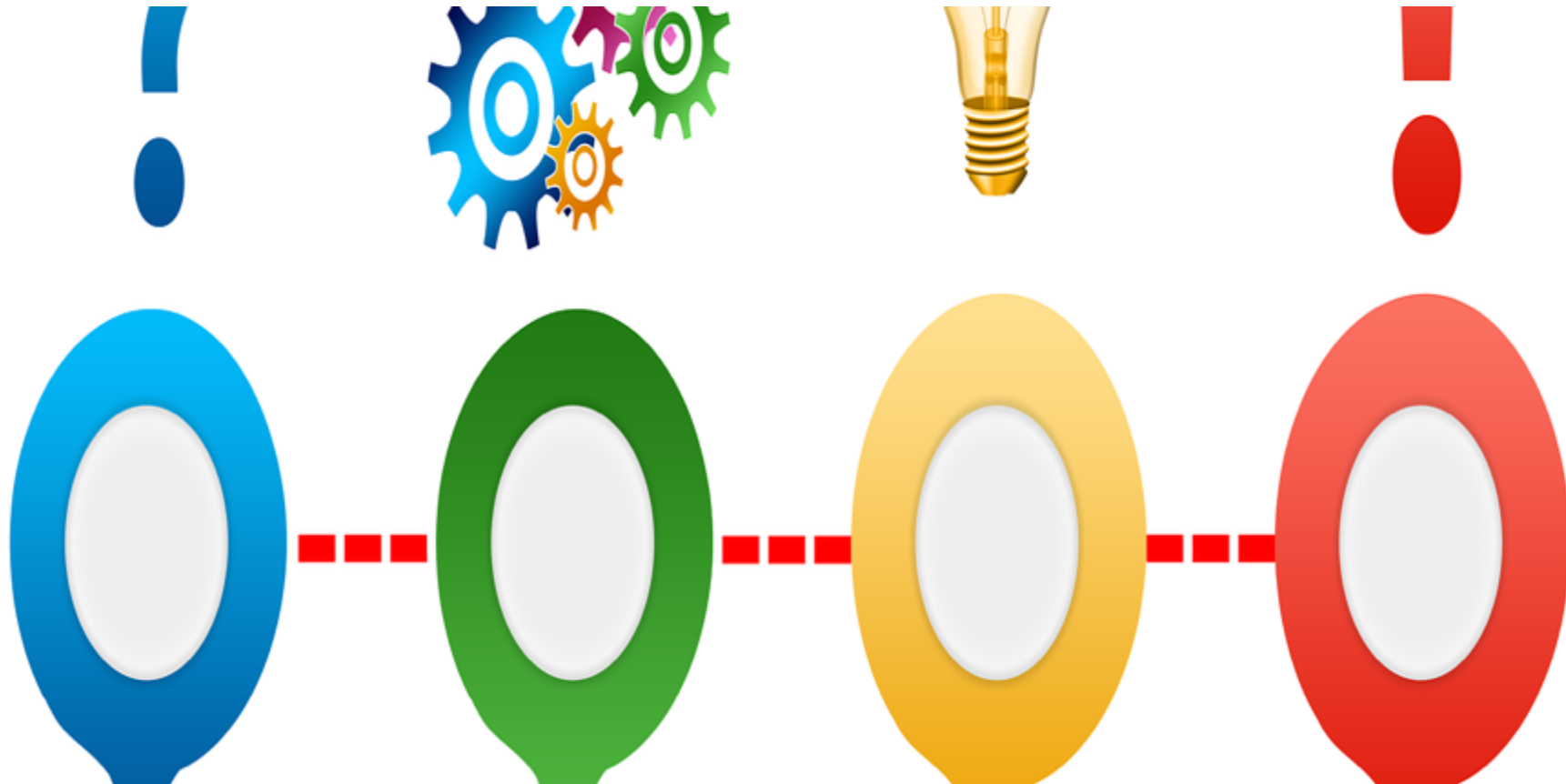
Language and Content Objectives

- **Language Objectives:** “Students will be able to” (SWBAT) + concrete measurable outcome + **language to be learned**
- **Content Objectives:** “Students will be able to” (SWBAT) + concrete measurable outcome + **content to be learned**
- **Examples:**
 - Students will be able to learn past participles 
 - Students will be able to understand addition and subtraction 

How could we rewrite these objectives?

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

What is a **task**?



Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

What is a **task**?

- A communicative language learning activity that:
 - Engages the learner's interest
 - Focuses on meaning (over form)
 - Usually involves some sort of “gap”
 - Makes task completion a priority
 - Relates to real world activities—is meaningful

Is this a task?

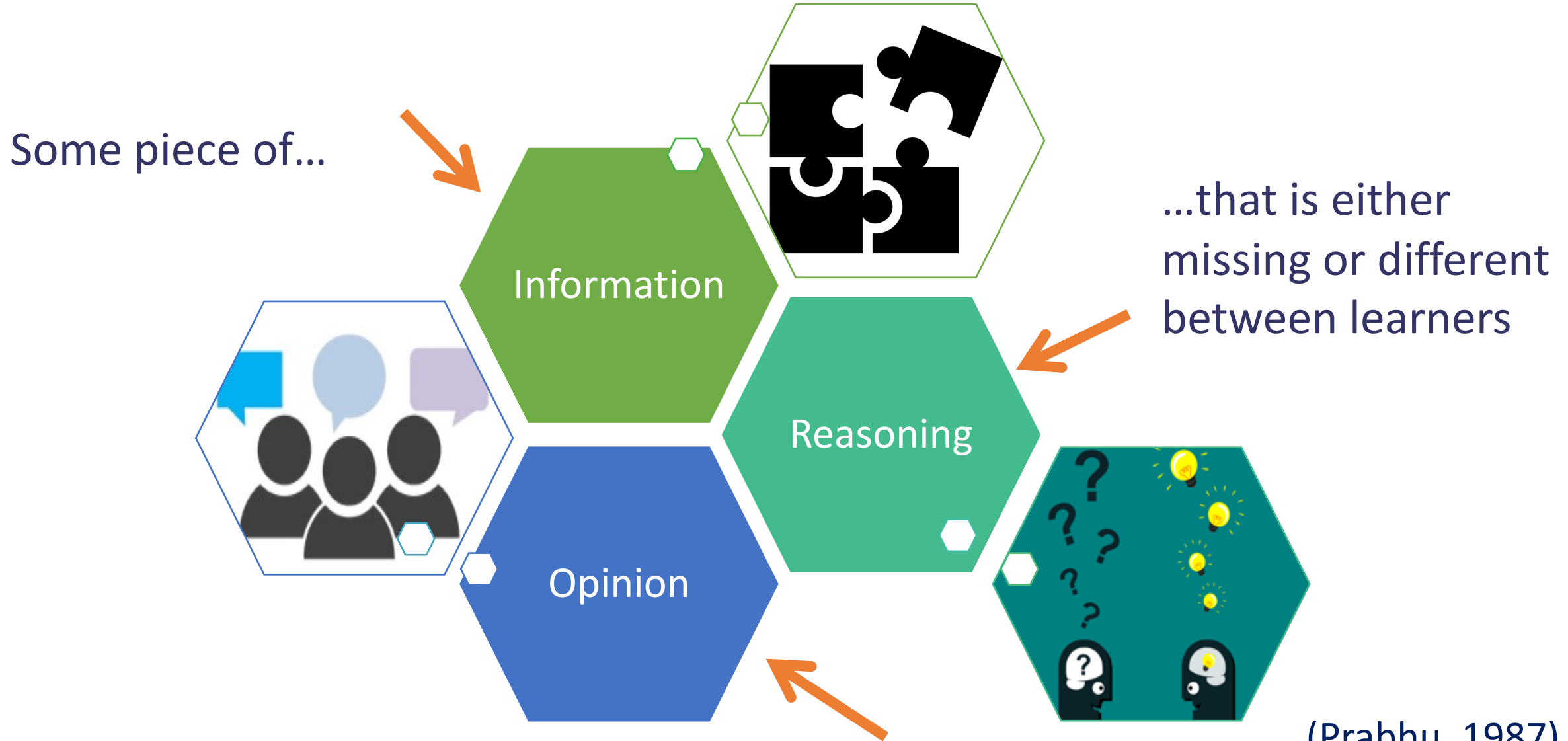
Fill in the blanks with the correct past participle:

1. Teddy was (take) _____ to the hospital in an ambulance.
2. The (lose) _____ child could not find her parents.
3. The entrepreneur had (create) _____ a new business model.

NO!

Adapted from Willis & Willis (2007)

Three Types of Task “Gaps”



(Prabhu, 1987)

Examples of Task “Gap” Types

Information

- Each member of a group has an incomplete picture and must work together to come up with an understanding of the whole

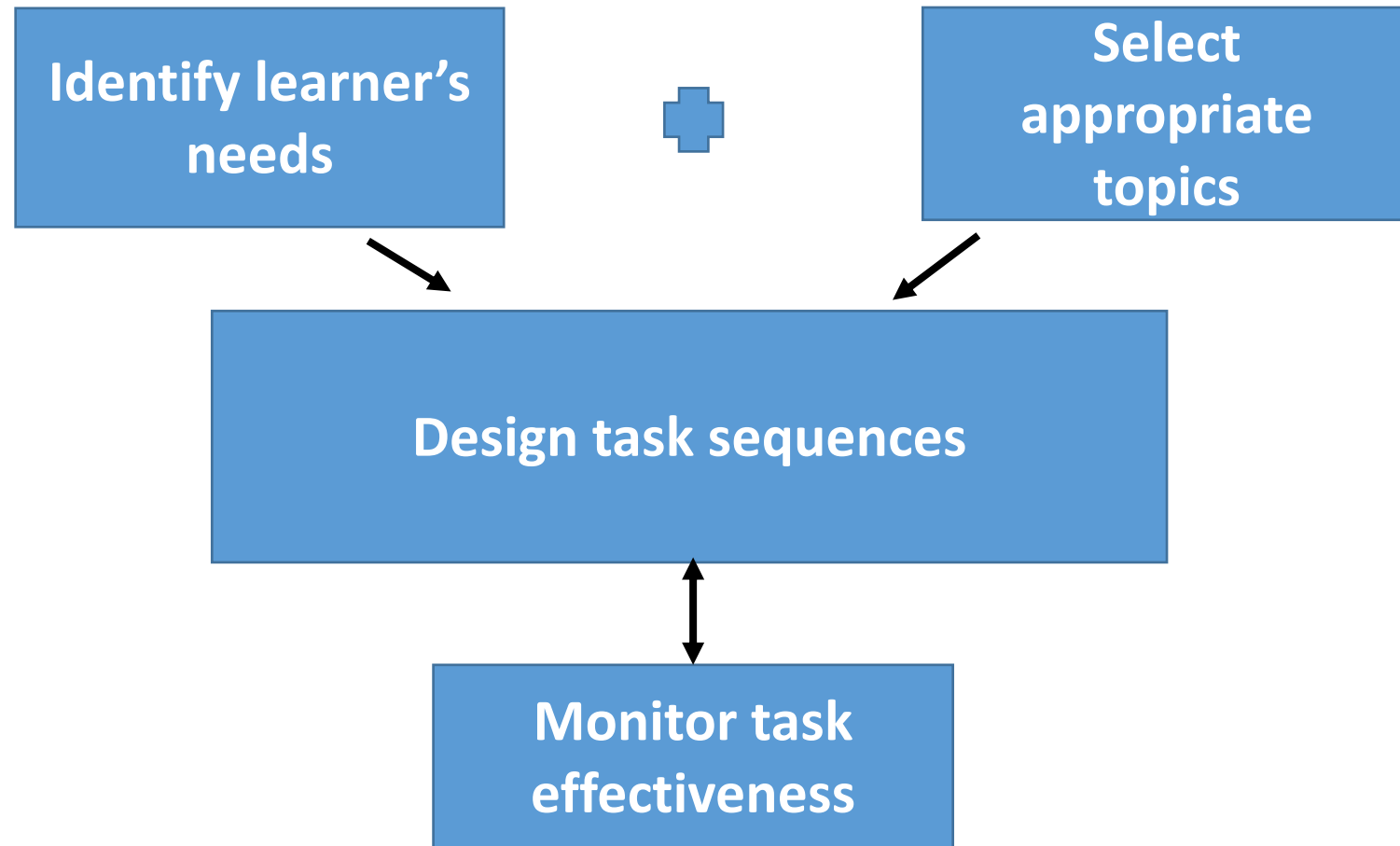
Reasoning

- Everyone must work together to decide the best (quickest, cheapest) way to get from one place to another

Opinion

- Students must share their beliefs and compare their opinions with their classmates in the discussion of a social issue

Designing a Task



Adapted from Willis & Willis (2007)



What types of communicative tasks have you used in your teaching?

Types of Communicative Tasks

Listing

Ordering &
Sorting

Matching

Comparing

Problem-
Solving

Projects &
Creative Tasks

Sharing
Personal
Experiences

Practice – A Task in Action

- **Context:** English language class at a community center in Philadelphia
- **Students:** Adult immigrants of varying proficiency levels
- **Learning Goal:** Improve their English proficiency skills for everyday communication



Practice – A Task in Action: Reflection



Topic: Library Basics

Objective: Students will be able to compose oral texts to discuss and ask questions about everyday topics.

- How could this objective be revised to better reflect the language and content of the lesson?

Practice – A Task in Action

Student A

Library Rules & Policies



Student B

Library Map



Practice – A Task in Action

Student A

Library Rules & Policies

Questions for Student B:

- Where is the history/art/ fiction section?
- Where can I find a book by Mark Twain (or another author)?
- Where can I find a book about travel?

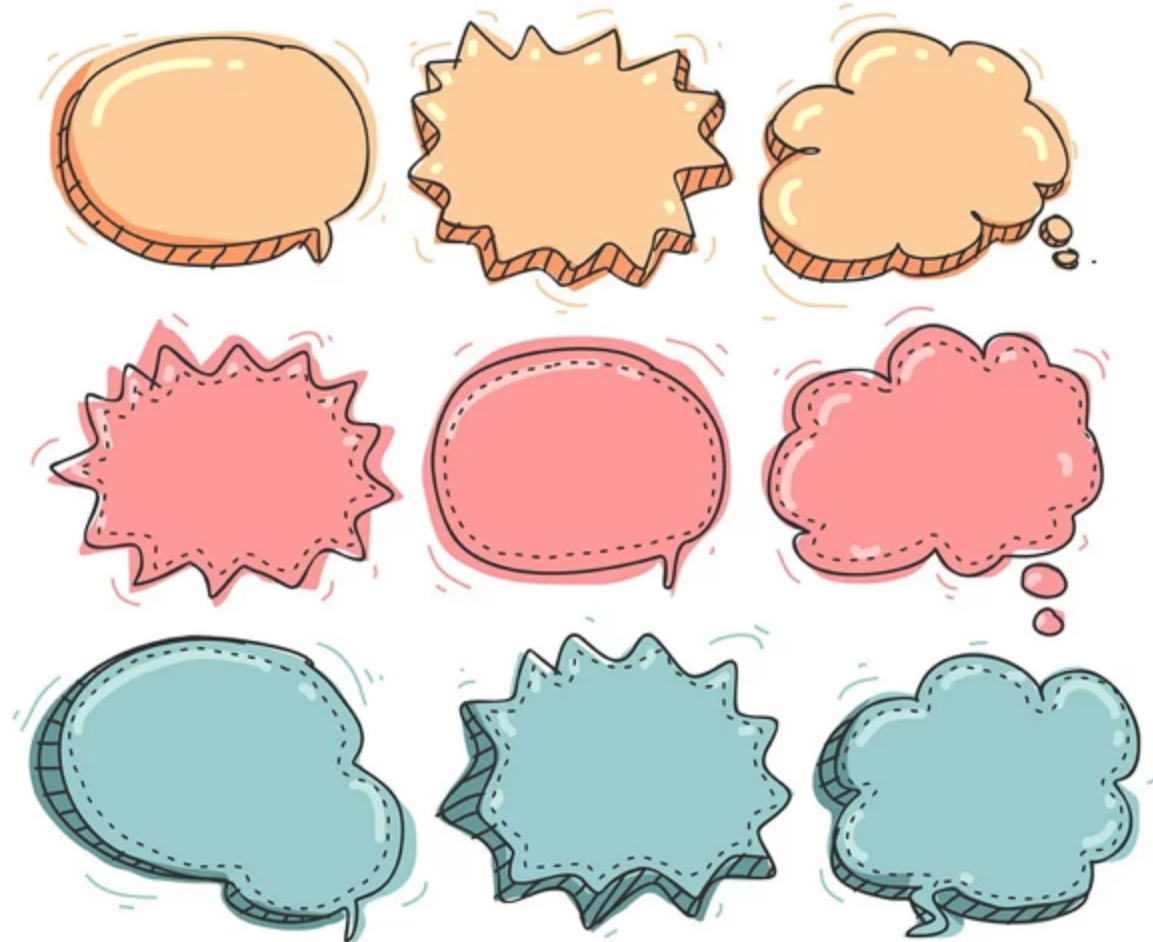
Student B

Library Map

Questions for Student A:

- How many books can I borrow?
- How long can I keep the books?
- Do I have to pay anything?

How is language and content integrated in this task?





How is language being used for communicative purposes in this task?

Practice – A Task in Action: Reflection



Topic: Library Basics

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Final Reflection on TESOL Methodology

- There is no “one-size-fits-all” method
- Instead, teachers should consider the following when adopting an instructional approach:
 - the local context
 - diversity of learners’ needs and goals
 - their own beliefs and principles about language and learning
- Teachers’ approaches can (and should!) change over time and from classroom to classroom

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Reflection and Discussion Questions

1. Which language teaching methods or approaches are popular where you teach?
2. What is the difference between a language learning task and an exercise? Can both be effective activities in an English language classroom? Why or why not?
3. How do you try to learn about new and updated TESOL methods? What steps do you take to incorporate new approaches in your classroom?



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